

## **Lewis and Clark Trail Study meeting. Nov 9, 2009**

### **A. Introduction and initial comments**

#### **1. Dolores: Introduction and welcome.**

a. Wanted to update committee on conversation she had with Randy at Corp of Engineers regarding the levees. Randy very receptive to idea of trails on levee's, sent a diagram to Dolores of levees under Corp's jurisdiction.

2. Marty: Purpose of meeting is to review overall concept, alignments of the trail. There is a need to come up with one main route, or "spine," and how the networks, offshoots, family loops work into this main trail.

a. Three primary levels of trail experience to concentrate on: river route adhering nearest river using gravel roads and levees, and Valley route-nearly flat, more paved roads and some gravel east of river route (I-29 experience). Finally, the hill route makes extensive use of scenic byways routes in and near Loess Hills. For the most part, the hill route will utilize paved roads.

b. Important that all routes are continuous. Largest capital investment will be where all three routes are together. This "spine," or combined route would be the primary route, incorporating features of all three. Additionally, family loops will attempt to incorporate themes from all three. Family loops are manageable day trips (20-30 miles), providing a taste of all three experiences.

c. Pictures from each region along the possible routes are briefly shared.

3. Question from committee member regarding grade of hill route. Grade will not be severe (>3 %).

### **Hamburg to Pac. Junction**

#### **A. Marty presents possible routes and loops in this region.**

1. From Hamburg to Nebraska City, river route includes gravel and levee.

2. Dike Road and 210<sup>th</sup> Ave, which goes under I-29 could be a nice option to use HWY 2 less. Dike road is accessed from L-40 going north out of Hamburg. Dike road is presently gravel.

3. Family loops, NW of Hamburg, and North of NE City, would be eligible for capital improvements, and would be an experience of all three thematic areas.

4. Possible spur from L-31, NW to Plattsmouth.

5. Possible family route between Bartlett, Thurman, and levee.

7. Parts of Bluff road could benefit from some off-road option, even though traffic volumes are low.

### **Comments:**

-Is the levee a 50 year levee? Dolores thinks the levee system is 100 year for the most part.

-Are there ADA considerations on approaching levees? Yes, actually not too difficult. Approach to levee is usually not very steep. Levee approach would not exceed 5% grade.

Marty: Mainly as a matter of cost, likely that few levee trails will be paved. Granulated stone, as is used on the Wabash is more likely.

-Equestrian allowed on Levee trail? Probably not, levee's will probably be reserved for lighter uses.

-Who has control over levees? Does the Corp of Engineers own the levees? Many areas are owned by private landowners, Corp has an easement.

**-Trails through middle of DNR property are generally not possible.** Trail North from Nebraska City through Copeland Bend is not possible. This threatens 4 million in federal aid, which is extremely restrictive. Land would have to be acquired on the edge of the DNR property. Copeland Bend could not be used, but land acquired adjacent could have a trail. Horses are prevented altogether on DNR property.

Connector between Bluff Road and Valley Route along Forney Lake is a very good idea. Issue with DNR property around Forney Lake is not a problem because trail would be on edge of DNR land. Bluff Road is slightly elevated, very pleasant.

Question regarding Adventure Cycling route in the area. Existing adventure cycling route uses Steamboat Trace from Brownville to Nebraska City, then uses L-31 north.

How much public participation do you anticipate happening between now and February? Marty: Another cycle of meetings, (much like July and September meetings) for the public will occur in the spring.

Would individual communities building their own spurs have access to the spine? This is greatly encouraged. Brownville is a good example of this. Access to main L & C trail should be planned. Encourage travelers to visit local sites of interest.

#### **Pacific Junction and north to Council Bluffs**

A. Marty presents possible routes in this region.

1. Valley and River route come together south of Pacific Junction.
2. Hwy. 34 southwest of Glenwood is heavily traveled and would have to be a side path.
3. Pathway along new bridge approach is approximate location on map.
4. 275 North out of Glenwood should be avoided due to high traffic.
5. All three trails converge at Iowa West Trailhead (Wabash) as one travels north.
6. New South Omaha bridge will have a sidepath along it.
7. Problem in NE is gap between levee-top trail and Heartland of America Park.
8. River route will incorporate riverfront trail in Council Bluffs
9. From Big Lake Park in CB north to Lewis and Clark Monument is a and long climb.
10. North of Crescent on Hwy 183/L20 is particularly beautiful, side or shoulder path needed because of higher traffic volumes over 1,000 vehicles per day.

#### **Comments:**

Gravel roads are a concern. Not enjoyable by bike. Possible need to hard-surface L-19 north of Council Bluffs.

Immediately north of CB, the levee ceases, and I-29 plays that role. This is the reason the river trail joins the valley trail in this area.

-L-31 also contains a segment south of Council Bluffs that is gravel and should be paved.

#### **Boyer Bend to Monona Line**

A. Marty presents possible routes and in this region.

1. Option of developing a route along Boyer levee, which is now under construction.
2. Three separate routes allow for flexibility in reaching service areas.
3. Sidepath along Hwy 30 is necessary.

4. A few options for river route between Missouri Valley and Modale. Two involve land acquisitions around California Bend/Tyson Island State Wildlife area.
5. A spur to Logan is considered because of attractions along Hwy 30 in that area. 260<sup>th</sup> would be the link back to the west edge of the hills.
6. North of Mondamin, there is another option for river route west of Interstate.
7. Magnolia option is steep to get up to, but provides dramatic views.
8. North of Little Sioux, River route utilizes DNR land as it nears Monona County Line.
9. L20 North of Mo. Valley has significant traffic volumes.

**Comments:**

- Steve Durrant suggests improvements to gravel road 1 mile north of Hwy 30 west of Missouri Valley, instead of using Hwy 30.
- There is no public access to California Bend by road, only by water.
- Tyson Island existing public access is only from the North.

**Monona Line to Snyder Bend**

A. Marty presents possible routes and in this region.

1. Huff Access County Park is along river route west of Blencoe, and is gravel.
2. Reason for valley route to go south west of Onawa is to access Lewis and Clark State Park along with the river route.
3. Committee member comment: **There is a paved road to access Preparation Canyon State Park that is not on RDG's maps. This presents the possibility of a paved route between Hwy 183 to the east of the park, and L14/Larpenteur road to the west.**
4. Onawa north to Whiting along K-45 is suggested as a possible route. K-45 has higher traffic volumes, while K-42 has about ¼ of the traffic volume.
5. Also some options for river route west and north of Onawa, although tribal land is involved. Nice string of public lands as one goes north from Onawa along the river.
6. No good river access for river route between Whiting and Sloan.
7. 141 becomes Morningside Ave as one enters Sioux City.

**Comments:**

DNR situation around Snyder Bend: Road closures at certain times of the year.

**Snyder Bend to Sioux City**

A. Marty presents possible routes and in this region.

1. Hwy 982/Morningside Ave/Old Hwy. 141 is a particularly good entrance to Sioux City.
2. Possibility of using Southbound I-29 rest-stop at Sergeant Bluff, allowing cyclists and motorists to interact.
3. River and Valley route follow riverside trail through Sioux City.
4. All three routes come together at Stone State Park.
5. Big Sioux River riverfront option is a possibility.

**NOTES/Reactions**

Project and steering committee joint meeting  
November 9, 2009

Prefer hill route

Issues of interaction with cars on winding roads

Get information out to local governments, people, engineers

Fremont County – areas where the hills, river, valley are very close together – focus resources in areas where all 3 features are close together.

Likes multiple trails idea – scenery and views versus faithfulness of L&C route  
Hill path has best views

Interesting concept – jurisdictional issues

Impressed by how much of the valley and hill routes are already there and usable – improve publicity and awareness

Individual loops are a good idea – gives people an opportunity to see all environments  
Need to connect with county engineers and maintenance departments

Likes loops with different resources available

Promotion of recreational opportunities

Promote L&C in brochures

Likes connection to Logan

Money becomes available – need to publicize and set priorities county by county

River trail would be prettiest but most difficult to do.

Hill trail is very nice and probably is the priority trail

Could do loop segments of the river route

Likes Larpenteur/Murray Hill/Morehead loop

Use new bridge east of Blencoe

Pave Larpenteur section from E54 to Easton Road

May have a focus on the loops, with making connections between loops.

Bigger market than through riders

Focus on the easier to complete loops

Closing short gaps in loops is more palatable than very long distance components

MPO boards will be concerned about costs

Need shorter loops around Sioux City

Sioux City loop with land purchased with bypass – goes into the back side of Bacon Creek, opens up NE side

Natural environments – 5 preserves, 3 state parks, camp Hitchcock, many other properties: need to promote these resources

Emphasize natural environments that are here.

Need to get info out to clubs, bicycle magazines.

Spine could move back and forth among the three concepts

Loops promote idea of connectivity and trail development in local communities  
In setting priorities, consult city and county comp plans  
Need to compare our maps with INHF maps

Need to accommodate constraints on DNR lands  
Great to tie small communities in

Concerns about DNR issues and requirements  
Corps has no access easements – access to levees must be negotiated with individual landowners: a hurdle, one that's been dealt with in other places  
Don't really see the river from the levees – you see other things, like floodplains.  
All about expectations.

NAMES:

- Western Iowa Trail
- Multiple Loops are a plus, Western Iowa Loops Trail (WILT)
- Five nature preserves and three state parks
- Missouri River Educational Trail
- Nature, wildlife, wetlands, prairie
- Loops will generate their own identity and should have specific names
- Lewis and Clark most well-known identity nationally and internationally: define whole concept of the West
- Rather not hear names that are not unique
- Sergeant Floyd's Passage Scenic Bikeway
- Really building a network rather than a point to point trail
- "Trail" implies a separated, off-road facility
- Circles of Life
- Western Iowa Recreational Byways
- Circles of Discovery

Dolores:

Next meeting is not until February, so feel free to call with comments, questions, possible names.  
Steering and planning committee being together works better. On February 10<sup>th</sup>, there will be just one meeting, most likely at 10 a.m.